

## Scena Quinta.

Enter Isabell and Francisca a Nuns.

*Isa.* And have you Nuns no farther priuiledges?  
*Nun.* Are not these large enough?  
*Isa.* Yes truly; I speake not as desiring more,  
 But rather wishing a more strict restraint  
 Vpon the Sisterhood, the Votarists of Saint Clare.  
*Lucio within.*  
*Luc.* Hoa? peace be in this place.  
*Isa.* Who's that which calls?  
*Nun.* It is a mans voice: gentle *Isabella*.  
 Turne you the key, and know his businesse of him;  
 You may; I may not: you are yet vnsworne:  
 When you haue vowd, you must not speake with men,  
 But in the presence of the *Prioress*;  
 Then if you speake, you must not show your face;  
 Or if you show your face, you must not speake:  
 He calls againe: I pray you answere him.  
*Isa.* Peace and prosperitie: who is't that calls?  
*Luc.* Haile Virgin, (if you be) as those cheeke-Roses  
 Proclaime you are no lesse: can you so steed me,  
 As bring me to the sight of *Isabella*.  
 A Nouice of this place, and the faire Sister  
 To her vnhappy brother *Claudio*?  
*Isa.* Why her vnhappy Brother? Let me aske,  
 The rather for I now must make you know  
 I am that *Isabella*, and his Sister.  
*Luc.* Gentle & faire: your Brother kindly greets you;  
 Not to be weary with you; he's in prison.  
*Isa.* Woe me; for what?  
*Luc.* For that, which if my selfe might be his Iudge,  
 He should receiue his punishment, in thanks:  
 He hath got his friend with childe.  
*Isa.* Sir, make me not your storie.  
*Luc.* 'Tis true; I would not, though 'tis my familiar sin,  
 With Maids to seeme the Lapwing, and to leste  
 Tongue, far from heart: play with all Virgins so:  
 I hold you as a thing en-skied, and fainted,  
 By your renoucement, an immortall spirit  
 And to be talk'd with in sincerity,  
 As with a Saint.  
*Isa.* You doe blaspheme the good, in mocking me.  
*Luc.* Doe not beleue it: fewnes, and truth; tis thus,  
 Your brother, and his louer haue embrac'd;  
 As those that feed, grow full: as blossoming Time  
 That from the seednes, the bare fallow brings  
 To teeming foynson: euen so her plenteous wombe  
 Expresseth his full Tilth, and husbandry.  
*Isa.* Some one with childe by him? my cosen *Iuliet*?  
*Luc.* Is she your cosen?  
*Isa.* Adoptedly, as schoole-maids change their names  
 By vaine, though apt affection.  
*Luc.* She it is.  
*Isa.* Oh, let him marry her.  
*Luc.* This is the point.  
 The Duke is very strangely gone from hence;  
 Bore many gentlemen (my selfe being one)  
 In hand, and hope of action: but we doe learne,  
 By those that know the very Nerves of State,  
 His giuing-out, were of an infinite distance  
 From his true meant designe: vpon his place,

(And with full line of his authority)  
 Gouvernes Lord *Angelo*; A man, whose blood  
 Is very snow-broth: one, who neuer feels  
 The wanton stings, and motions of the sence;  
 But doth rebate, and blunt his naturall edge  
 With profits of the minde: Studie, and fast  
 He (to giue feare to vs, and libertie,  
 Which haue, for long, run-by the hideous law,  
 As Myce, by Lyons) hath pickt out an act,  
 Vnder whole heauy sence, your brothers life  
 Falls into forfeit: he arrests him on it,  
 And followes close the rigor of the Statute  
 To make him an example: all hope is gone,  
 Vnlesse you haue the grace, by your faire praier  
 To soften *Angelo*: And that's my pith of businesse  
 'T wixt you, and your poore brother.

*Isa.* Doth he so,  
 Seeke his life?  
*Luc.* Has censur'd him already,  
 And as I heare, the Prouost hath a warrant  
 For's execution.  
*Isa.* Alas: what poore  
 Abilitie's in me, to doe him good.  
*Luc.* Alay the powre you haue.  
*Isa.* My power? alas, I doubt.  
*Luc.* Our doubts are traitors  
 And makes vs loose the good we oft might win,  
 By fearing to attempt: Goe to Lord *Angelo*  
 And let him learne to know, when Maidens sue  
 Men giue like gods: but when they weepe and kneele,  
 All their petitions, are as freely theirs  
 As they themselues would owe them.  
*Isa.* Ile see what I can doe.  
*Luc.* But speedily.  
*Isa.* I will about it strait;  
 No longer staying, but to giue the Mother  
 Notice of my affaire: I humbly thanke you:  
 Commend me to my brother: soone at night  
 Ile send him certaine word of my successe.  
*Luc.* I take my leaue of you.  
*Isa.* Good sir, adieu. Exeunt.

## Actus Secundus. Scena Prima.

Enter *Angelo*, *Escalus*, and seruants, Iustice.

*Ang.* We must not make a scar-crow of the Law,  
 Setting it vp to feare the Birds of prey,  
 And let it keepe one shape, till custome make it  
 Their perch, and not their terror.  
*Esc.* I, but yet  
 Let vs be keene, and rather cut a little  
 Then fall, and bruiſe to death: alas, this gentleman  
 Whom I would saue, had a most noble father,  
 Let but your honour know  
 (Whom I beleue to be most strait in vertue)  
 That in the working of your owne affections,  
 Had time coheard with Place, or place with wishing,  
 Or that the resolute acting of our blood  
 Could haue attaind th'effect of your owne purpose,  
 Whether you had not sometime in your life  
 Er'd in this point, which now you censure him,  
 And puld the Law vpon you.  
*Ang.* 'Tis one thing to be tempted (*Escalus*)  
 Another

Another thing to fall: I not deny  
 The lury passing on the Prisoners life  
 May in the sworne-twelve haue a thiefe, or two  
 Guiltier then him they try; what's open made to Iustice,  
 That Iustice ceizes: What knowes the Lawes  
 That theewes do passe on theewes? 'Tis very pregnant,  
 The Iewell that we finde, we stoope, and take't,  
 Because we see it: but what we doe not see,  
 We tread vpon, and neuer thinke of it.  
 You may not so extenuate his offence,  
 For I haue had such faults; but rather tell me  
 When I, that censure him, do so offend,  
 Let mine owne Iudgement patterne out my death,  
 And nothing come in partiall. Sir, he must dye.

Enter *Prouost*.

*Esc.* Be it as your wisdom will.  
*Ang.* Where is the *Prouost*?  
*Pro.* Here if it like your honour.  
*Ang.* See that *Claudio*  
 Be executed by nine to morrow morning,  
 Bring him his Confessor, let him be prepar'd,  
 For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage.  
*Esc.* Well: heauen forgie him; and forgie vs all:  
 Some rise by sinne, and some by vertue fall:  
 Some run from brakes of Ice, and answere none,  
 And some condemned for a fault alone.

Enter *Elbow*, *Froth*, *Clowne*, *Officers*.

*Elb.* Come, bring them away: if these be good people  
 in a Common-weale, that doe nothing but vse their  
 abuses in common houses, I know no law: bring them  
 away.  
*Ang.* How now Sir, what's your name? And what's  
 the matter?  
*Elb.* If it please your honour, I am the poore Dukes  
 Constable, and my name is *Elbow*; I doe leane vpon Iu-  
 stice Sir, and doe bring in here before your good honor,  
 two notorious Benefactors.  
*Ang.* Benefactors? Well: What Benefactors are they?  
 Are they not Malefactors?  
*Elb.* If it please your honour, I know not well what  
 they are: But precise villaines they are, that I am sure of,  
 and void of all prophanation in the world, that good  
 Christians ought to haue.

*Esc.* This comes off well: here's a wise Officer.

*Ang.* Goe to: What quality are they of? *Elbow* is  
 your name?  
 Why do'st thou not speake *Elbow*?

*Clow.* He cannot Sir: he's out at *Elbow*.*Ang.* What are you Sir?

*Elb.* He Sir: a Tapster Sir: parcell Baud: one that  
 serues a bad woman: whose house Sir was (as they say)  
 pluckt downe in the Suborbs: and now shee professes a  
 hot-house; which, I thinke is a very ill house too.

*Esc.* How know you that?

*Elb.* My wife Sir: whom I detest before heauen, and  
 your honour.

*Esc.* How? thy wife?

*Elb.* I Sir: whom I thanke heauen is an honest wo-  
 man.

*Esc.* Do'st thou detest her therefore?

*Elb.* I say sir, I will detest my selfe also, as well as she,  
 that this house, if it be not a Bands house, it is pitty of her  
 life, for it is a naughty house.

*Esc.* How do'st thou know that, Constable?

*Elb.* Marry sir, by my wife, who, if she had bin a wo-  
 man Cardinally giuen, might haue bin accus'd in forni-

cation, adultery, and all vncleanlinesse there.

*Esc.* By the womans meanes?

*Elb.* I sir, by Mistris *Ouer-dons* meanes: but as she spit  
 in his face, so she defide him.

*Clow.* Sir, if it please your honor, this is not so.

*Elb.* Proue it before these varlets here, thou honora-  
 ble man, proue it.

*Esc.* Doe you heare how he misplaces?

*Clow.* Sir, she came in great with childe: and longing  
 (sauing your honors reuerence) for stewd prewys; sir,  
 we had but two in the house, which at that very distant  
 time stood, as it were in a fruit dish (a dish of some three  
 pence; your honours haue scene such dishes) they are not  
 China-dishes, but very good dishes.

*Esc.* Go too: go too: no matter for the dish sir.

*Clow.* No indeede sir not of a pin; you are therein in  
 the right: but, to the point: As I say, this Mistris *Elbow*,  
 being (as I say) with childe, and being great bellied, and  
 longing (as I said) for prewys: and hauing but two in  
 the dish (as I said) Master *Froth* here, this very man, ha-  
 uing eaten the rest (as I said) & (as I say) paying for them  
 very honestly: for, as you know Master *Froth*, I could not  
 giue you three pence againe.

*Fro.* No indeede.

*Clow.* Very well: you being then (if you be remem-  
 bred) cracking the stones of the forsaide prewys.

*Fro.* I, so I did indeede.

*Clow.* Why, very well: I telling you then (if you be  
 remembered) that such a one, and such a one, were past  
 cure of the thing you wot of, vnlesse they kept very good  
 diet, as I told you.

*Fro.* All this is true.*Clow.* Why very well then.

*Esc.* Come: you are a tedious foole: to the purpose:  
 what was done to *Elbowes* wife, that hee hath cause to  
 complaine of? Come me to what was done to her.

*Clow.* Sir, your honor cannot come to that yet.*Esc.* No sir, nor I meane it not.

*Clow.* Sir, but you shall come to it, by your honours  
 leaue: And I beseech you, looke into Master *Froth* here  
 sir, a man of foure-score pound a yeare; whose father  
 died at *Hallowmas*: Was't not at *Hallowmas* Master  
*Froth*?

*Fro.* Allhallond-Eue.

*Clow.* Why very well: I hope here be truthe: he Sir,  
 sitting (as I say) in a lower chaire, Sir, 'twas in the bunch  
 of Grapes, where indeede you haue a delight to sit, haue  
 you not?

*Fro.* I haue so, because it is an open roome, and good  
 for winter.

*Clow.* Why very well then: I hope here be truthe.

*Ang.* This will last out a night in *Russia*  
 When nights are longest there: Ile take my leaue,  
 And leaue you to the hearing of the cause;  
 Hoping youle finde good cause to whip them all. *Exit.*

*Esc.* I thinke no lesse: good morrow to your Lord-  
 ship. Now Sir, come on: What was done to *Elbowes*  
 wife, once more?

*Clow.* Once Sir? there was nothing done to her once.

*Elb.* I beseech you Sir, aske him what this man did to  
 my wife.

*Clow.* I beseech your honor, aske me.*Esc.* Well sir, what did this Gentleman to her?

*Clow.* I beseech you sir, looke in this Gentlemans face:  
 good Master *Froth* looke vpon his honor; 'tis for a good  
 purpose: doth your honor marke his face?

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*Esc.* I